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# Louisiana Saltwater Finfish Commercial Rules and Regulations

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries



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# Harvesters

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## Saltwater/Freshwater Line

Louisiana's salt and freshwater areas are divided by a line that runs from the Intracoastal Waterway from the Texas-Louisiana boundary to its junction with Louisiana Highway 27 at Gibbstown, south to Louisiana Highway 82, east to its junction with the Intracoastal Waterway from Forked Island to Bayou Barataria to the Harvey Canal, the Harvey Canal to the Mississippi River, the Mississippi River to the Industrial Canal, the Industrial Canal to the Intracoastal Waterway, the Intracoastal Waterway to the Rigolets in Orleans Parish to the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Bridge, and the Louisville and Nashville Railroad right-of way from the Orleans Parish line to the Mississippi state line. Areas to the south of this line, including Lakes Maurepas, Pontchartrain, and St. Catherine, Chef Menteur Pass (except a 7/10 of a mile section from Bayou Sauvage south to the Intracoastal Waterway), the Rigolets, Unknown Pass, Pass Manchac, the Intracoastal Waterway, and the portion of the Calcasieu Ship Channel from the Intracoastal Waterway south to the Gulf of Mexico, are saltwater.



## State vs. Federal Waters

Louisiana state waters extend 9 nautical miles from the nearest land but further in some cases. Federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) waters extend from 9 nautical miles out to 200 nautical miles.

## Commercial Harvester Licenses and Fees

To harvest finfish commercially in Louisiana's saltwater areas, you must have the following LDWF-issued licenses:

- A **Commercial Fisherman's License\*** (\$55 resident, \$460 nonresident)
- A **Vessel License** in the vessel owner's name (\$15 resident, \$60 nonresident)
- **Gear Licenses\*** for the fishing gear you're using (*see pages 4–5*)

\*If you are a Louisiana resident, age 70 or older, you may instead purchase a **Senior Commercial License** (includes gear license) for \$20.

You must have additional special permits to harvest some species and/or use certain gears (*see pages 4–5 and 8–11*).

To sell finfish you have caught to anyone who doesn't have a

Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License (besides consumers) or transport your catch out-of-state, you must have a **Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License** (\$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident).

To sell finfish you have caught directly to consumers within the state, you must have a **Fresh Products License** (\$20 resident, \$120 nonresident). Your spouse must purchase a **Fresh Products-Spouse License** for \$5 to sell directly to consumers.

To apply for LDWF-issued licenses, call **225.765.2898** or visit LDWF's Headquarters at **2000 Quail Drive in Baton Rouge**. Renew your licenses online at **[www.la.wildlifelicense.com](http://www.la.wildlifelicense.com)**.

If you harvest finfish in federal waters or species such as reef fish, tuna, and swordfish in any waters, you must have applicable federal permits. For details, see pages 8-11 or call NOAA Fisheries at **877.376.4877**.

## Gear License Fees, Requirements, and Restrictions

STATE WATERS	
<b>Bow and arrow</b>	License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident
<b>Cast net</b>	License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident
<b>Eel pot</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident (any legal number)</li> <li>• You may only use eel pots to harvest eel. If you catch any other fish with this gear, you must immediately return it unharmed to the water.</li> <li>• Must be no longer than 48 inches and mesh must be at least 1/2 inch</li> <li>• Throats or flues must be smaller than 3 inches in diameter at their narrowest point and no larger than 5 inches in diameter at their widest point.</li> <li>• You may not connect lead or wings or use them in conjunction with an eel pot.</li> </ul>
<b>Flounder or garfish gig</b>	License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident (per gig)
<b>Rod and reel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$250 resident, \$1,000 nonresident (any legal number)</li> <li>• You must have a permit to use a rod and reel for commercial purposes. To qualify, you must have had a valid Saltwater Gill Net License during any two years from 1993 to 1995 and provide state and federal income tax returns (including Schedule C of the federal 1040 form) demonstrating more than 50% of your earned income came from the capture and sale of seafood in at least two years from 1993 to 1995.</li> </ul>
<b>Hoop net</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident (any legal number of nets)</li> <li>• Mesh must be at least 1 inch square or 2 inches stretched after treating with tar or copper</li> <li>• You may leave hoop nets unattended in saltwater areas if they're attached to a wharf at an inhabitable camp and tagged with an LDWF-issued tag.</li> <li>• You may leave hoop nets without leads unattended in saltwater areas only if you are harvesting catfish.</li> <li>• You may not have red drum or spotted seatrout on board any vessel that's carrying a hoop net.</li> </ul>

STATE WATERS CONTINUED	
<b>Mullet strike net</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$250 resident, \$1,000 nonresident (per net)</li> <li>• You must have a Mullet Permit to use a strike net to harvest mullet (<i>see page 9</i>).</li> <li>• You may only use strike nets to harvest striped mullet; you may not harvest any other fish while harvesting mullet with a strike net (or cast net).</li> <li>• You may not have red drum or spotted seatrout on board any vessel that's carrying a strike net.</li> <li>• Mesh must be at least 1-3/4 inches square or 3-1/2 inches stretched, and net must not exceed 1,200 feet in length.</li> <li>• You may only use one strike net from a vessel at any time, and you must attach an LDWF-issued tag to your mullet strike net.</li> <li>• You may not anchor or secure a strike net to the water bottom or shore.</li> <li>• You must actively work a strike net when it's in use—you may not leave a strike net unattended.</li> </ul>
<b>Pompano strike net</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$250 resident, \$1,000 nonresident (per net)</li> <li>• You must have a Pompano Permit to use a strike net to harvest pompano (<i>see page 9</i>).</li> <li>• You may only use pompano strike nets in waters more than 7 feet deep and beyond 2,500 feet from land within Breton and Chandeleur Sounds.</li> <li>• You may only use pompano strike nets during open seasons (August 1 to October 31 of each year).</li> <li>• You may not harvest any other fish while harvesting pompano with a strike net.</li> <li>• You may not have red drum or spotted seatrout on board any vessel that's carrying a strike net.</li> <li>• Mesh must be at least 2-1/2 inches square or 5 inches stretched, and net must not exceed 2,400 feet in length.</li> <li>• You must attach an LDWF-issued tag to your pompano strike net.</li> <li>• You must actively work a strike net when it's in use—you may not leave a strike net unattended.</li> </ul>
<b>Purse seine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$505 resident, \$2,020 nonresident (per seine)</li> <li>• You may only use purse seines in state waters to harvest menhaden and/or herring-like species.</li> </ul>
<b>Spear gun</b>	License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident (per spear gun)
<b>Trawl</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident (per trawl)</li> <li>• You may only use trawls in waters where and when shrimp season is open.</li> </ul>
<b>Trotline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident</li> <li>• Line must not be longer than 440 yards.</li> <li>• Hooks must be at least 24 inches apart.</li> </ul>
<b>Wire net</b>	License fee: \$25 resident, \$100 nonresident (any legal number of nets)
FEDERAL WATERS	
<b>Bandit gear</b>	You may not use bandit gear in state saltwater areas.
<b>Longlines</b>	You may not use longlines in state saltwater areas.
<b>Saltwater gill net, seines, strike nets, and trammel nets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You must have an LDWF-issued Traversing Permit (no fee) to transport gill nets, seines, strike nets, and trammel nets across state waters to use in federal waters. You may not use these gears in state saltwater areas (unless you have a special permit to use strike nets).</li> <li>• You may not possess red drum or spotted seatrout on vessels carrying these gears.</li> <li>• You must notify LDWF at <b>800.442.2511</b> or <b>225.765.2441</b> four hours before you leave port to traverse or fish under the conditions of the Traversing Permit and immediately when you return from the permitted trip.</li> </ul>

## Prohibited Gear

You may not use any of the following types of gear in state saltwater areas:

Spears (except for flounder and garfish)	Poisons
Stupefying substances or devices	Explosives
Guns	Tree-topping devices
Seines (unless you are harvesting menhaden and/or herring-like species)	Electric shocking instruments or devices
Snagging devices (not including bows and arrows; exceptions: garfish taken by spears)	Bandit gear (allowed in federal waters)
Longlines (not the same as trotlines—longlines are longer than 440 yards; allowed in federal waters)	Elevated trotlines (except in exempt areas)
Gill nets (unless you have a special permit to use strike nets to harvest mullet or pompano)	Trammel nets

You may not use any aircraft including fixed-wing aircraft, dirigibles, balloons, helicopters, or any other form of aerial surveillance to assist in harvesting finfish, except menhaden and herring-like fish.

## Area Restrictions

### *Free fish passage*

Do not set gear within 500 feet of the mouth of any inlet or pass or within 500 feet of any water control structures. This ensures fish can pass freely through these areas.

### *Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and Refuges*

Commercial fishing is **permitted** in:

- Atchafalaya Delta, except in the Limited Access Areas from September to January each year
- Pass-a-Loutre, except in the Limited Access Areas from September to January each year. Commercial mullet fishing is only permitted in: South Pass, Pass-a-Loutre, North Pass,

Southeast Pass, Northeast Pass, Dennis Pass, Johnson Pass, Loomis Pass, Cadro Pass, Wright Pass, Viveats Pass, Cognevich Pass, Blind Bay, Redfish Bay, Garden Island Bay, Northshore Bay, East Bay (west of Barrier Islands), and oil and gas canals as described on LDWF's Pass-a-Loutre WMA map.

- Pointe-aux-Chenes (in the Cut Off Canal and Wonder Lake); nighttime fishing is prohibited.

Commercial fishing is **prohibited** in:

- Elmer's Island
- Isle Derniers Barrier Island
- Rockefeller, State, and Marsh Island
- Salvador.

## Prohibited Saltwater Species

You may not harvest the following **federally listed threatened, endangered, or prohibited species**:

All whales	Dolphin (mammal)
West Indian manatees	Sea turtles

You may not harvest the following **gamefish**:

Red drum	Black marlin	Blue marlin
Hatchet marlin	Striped marlin	White marlin
Sailfish		

You may only purchase or sell the gamefish listed above if you import them. You must notify LDWF at **800.442.2511** or **225.765.2441** before you import any of these fish. When you import any of these fish, you must attach an official metal self-locking tag to one gill cover of each fish. These tags must be issued by the official conservation agency of the state from which the fish was taken and must show the originating water body and identity of the issuing agency. However, imported wild-caught red drum must only be accompanied by a bill of lading. Farm-raised red drum is exempt from these requirements if certified by LDWF as having been raised and harvested in accordance with a certified aquaculture program or a valid mariculture program.



You may not harvest **goliath grouper (jewfish)** or **Nassau grouper**.

You may not harvest, possess, purchase, sell, barter, exchange or attempt any of these activities for the following **shark species**:

Atlantic angel	Basking	Bigeye sand tiger
Bigeye sixgill	Bigeye thresher	Bignose
Caribbean reef	Caribbean sharpnose	Dusky
Galapagos	Largetooth sawfish	Longfin mako
Narrowtooth	Night	Sand tiger
Sevengill	Sixgill	Smalltail
Smalltooth	Whale	White

## Measuring Fish

First, place the fish on its side on a flat board with its jaw closed.

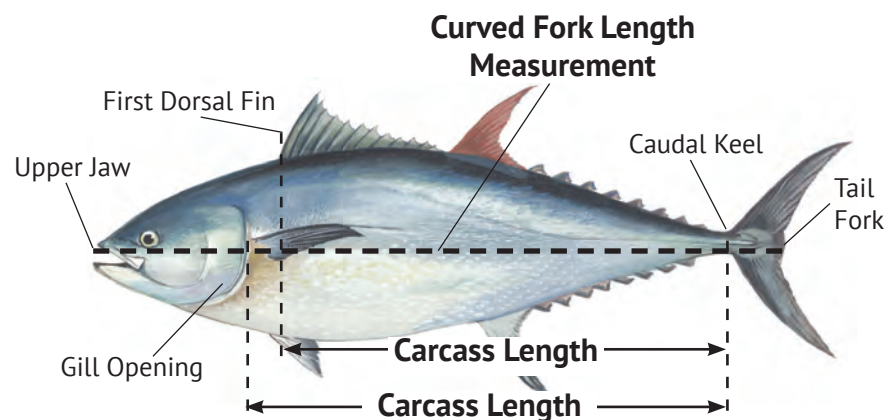
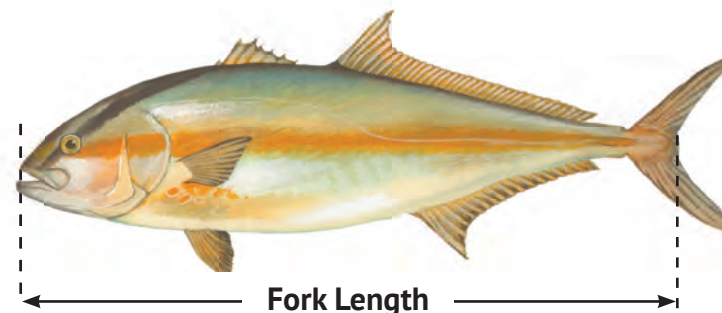
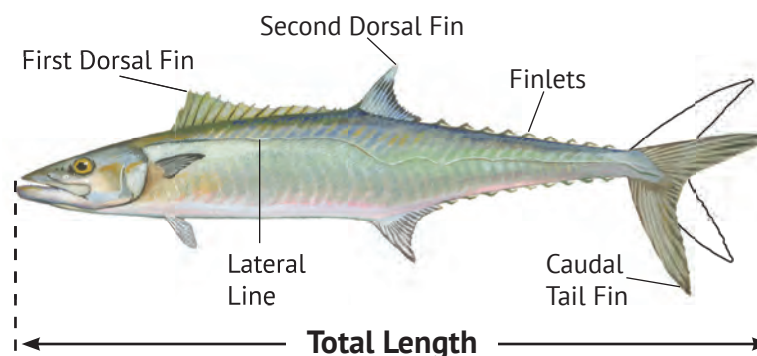
For **total length**, measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the extreme tip of the tail fin. Rotate the tail so you can determine the maximum length of the fish.

For **fork length**, measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail. For **curved fork length**, measure tracing the contour of the body from the tip of the upper jaw to the fork of the tail.

For **carcass length**, measure the curve from rear edge of gill opening or front of the first dorsal fin to the front edge of the caudal keel (the ridge found just before the tail fin).

### Did you know?

The top three saltwater finfish species landed in Louisiana are black drum, sheepshead, and flounder (not including menhaden).



*Fish illustrations by Duane Raver.*

## Species Regulations

You must return undersized fish back to the water unharmed; 5% (by number) of each species of commercial fish you harvest may be smaller than the legal limit. You may harvest commercial species with no specified size limit in any size and quantity. No one may sell, purchase, barter, trade, or exchange undersized fish (or attempt to do any of these activities).

Make sure that all saltwater finfish, except garfish, tuna, swordfish, and sharks, have their head and caudal fins intact until you put them on shore or sell them. Garfish must retain a strip of skin sufficient to clearly identify the fish until you put them on shore or sell them. All sharks aboard your vessel must have their fins naturally attached by at least some portion of uncut skin.

For the most current information, go to [www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-finfish](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-finfish).

COMMON COASTAL SPECIES				
Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
<b>Cobia</b>	33 in. min. fork length	Two fish per person per trip		You may only sell two cobia per trip.
<b>Black drum</b>	16 in. min. total length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16-27 in. total length: annual quota of 3.25 million pounds</li> <li>Longer than 27 in. total length: annual quota of 300,000 pounds</li> </ul>	Fishing year begins Sept. 1; open year-round, or until quota is harvested	
<b>Southern flounder</b>	None	10 fish for each licensed fisherman for each consecutive day on the water; however, commercial shrimping vessels may retain and sell all southern flounder harvested as bycatch on a shrimping trip	Year-round	
<b>King mackerel</b>	24 in. min. fork length	3,000 pounds per trip	Season begins Jul. 1, closes when quota is reached	You must have a federal permit when fishing in federal waters.
<b>Spanish mackerel</b>	12 in. min. fork length	None	Fishing year begins Apr. 1, closes when quota is reached	You must have a federal permit when fishing in federal waters.
<b>Menhaden</b>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bait: annual quota of 3,000 metric tons (6,613,800 pounds)</li> <li>Purse seine: none</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular: 3rd Mon. in Apr.—Nov. 1</li> <li>Bait: from close of regular menhaden season until Dec. 1; if quota has not been harvested by Dec. 1, fishermen may take bait menhaden beginning on Apr. 1 of the following year until they harvest the quota; you may only sell menhaden harvested during bait season as bait</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may not possess more than 5%, by weight, of any species other than menhaden and herring-like species.</li> <li>You may only use purse seines to harvest menhaden or herring-like species. You may not use this gear for any other purpose in state waters.</li> <li>You may only fish for menhaden in waters seaward of the inside-outside line, including federal waters and Chandeleur and Breton Sounds.</li> </ul>



Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
<b>Striped mullet</b>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may not harvest any other fish while harvesting mullet with a strike net or cast net.</li> <li>Strike net: None</li> <li>Live bait: None, but all mullet you harvest commercially with a cast net must remain alive until you sell it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strike net: 3rd Mon. in Oct.—3rd Mon. in following Jan.; harvest only allowed Mon.—Fri., from sunrise to sunset</li> <li>Live bait: year-round, with cast net only; harvest only allowed Mon.—Fri., from sunrise to sunset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unless harvesting mullet for live bait, you must have a Mullet Permit (\$100 resident, \$400 nonresident) to harvest and sell mullet (in addition to other commercial fishing and gear licenses). To qualify, you must have had a Saltwater Gill Net License during any two years from 1993 to 1995 and provide state and federal income tax returns (including Schedule C of the federal 1040 form) demonstrating more than 50% of your earned income came from the capture and sale of seafood in at least two years from 1993 to 1995.</li> <li>You may only harvest mullet with a mullet strike net. See page 5 for details. However, you may harvest mullet for live bait with a commercial cast net (no more than 12 feet in radius, operated manually, during any season, with the appropriate gear licenses).</li> </ul>
<b>Florida pompano</b>	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strike net: Aug. 1—Oct. 31 of each year, only in Chandeleur and Breton Sounds, from sunrise to sunset</li> <li>Other legal gears: year-round</li> </ul>	You must have a Pompano Permit (no fee) to harvest and sell pompano caught with a strike net in Chandeleur and Breton Sounds during open seasons ( <i>see page 5</i> ).
<b>Spotted seatrout (speckled trout)</b>	14 in. min. total length	Annual quota of 1 million pounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2nd day of Jan. until the last day of Dec., or until the quota is reached (whichever comes first).</li> <li>No harvest on weekends (from official sunset on Fri. to official sunrise on Mon.).</li> <li>You may not harvest more spotted seatrout than recreational limit between the hours of 10 pm and 5 am during open seasons and any time during closed seasons (you must also have Basic Recreational and Saltwater Fishing Licenses to do so).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You must have a Spotted Seatrout Permit (\$100 resident, \$400 nonresident) to harvest and sell spotted seatrout (in addition to other commercial fishing and gear licenses). To qualify, you must have had a Saltwater Gill Net License during any two years from 1993 to 1995 and provide state and federal income tax returns (including Schedule C of the federal 1040 form) demonstrating more than 50% of your earned income came from the capture and sale of seafood in at least two years from 1993 to 1995. Saltwater guides may not obtain a Spotted Seatrout Permit.</li> <li>You may only use commercial rod-and-reel gear to harvest spotted seatrout. If you're carrying a gill, strike, hoop, or trammel net or seine on your vessel, you may not harvest spotted seatrout.</li> </ul>
<b>Sheepshead</b>	10 in. min. fork length	None	Year-round	
<b>Tripletail</b>	18 in. min. total length	100 pounds per trip; no more than one vessel trip per day		

**REEF FISH:** You must have a NOAA Fisheries-issued Commercial Reef Fish Vessel Permit to harvest or sell the following reef fish species, regardless of whether you're fishing in state or federal waters: triggerfish, amberjack, wrasse, snapper, grouper, and tilefish. Federally-permitted reef fish vessels must carry vessel monitoring systems onboard. Additional federal regulations apply to the harvest of reef fish species.

Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
<b>Greater amberjack</b>	36 in. min. fork length	2,000 pounds per trip. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quota online at <a href="http://gulfcouncil.org/fishing_regulations/CommercialRegulations.pdf">gulfcouncil.org/fishing_regulations/CommercialRegulations.pdf</a> .	Closed Mar. 1 – May 31	
<b>Lesser amberjack</b>	14 in. min. fork length and 22 in. max. fork length	None	None	
<b>Grouper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Black: 24 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Gag: 22 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Red: 18 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Scamp: 16 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Yellowfin: 20 in. min. total length</li> <li>• None for misty, snowy, yellowedge, and warsaw groupers and speckled hind</li> </ul>	Groupers are managed under an IFQ program; you must an IFQ allocation to harvest groupers. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quotas online at <a href="http://portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html">portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html</a> .		You must call NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement at least 3 hours, but no more than 24 hours, before landing groupers. You must report the location of landing, name of the IFQ dealer receiving your catch, and estimated gutted weight of your catch per IFQ category. You may not transfer any of these species between vessels at sea or dockside. Call <b>877.376.4877</b> or go to <a href="http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov">sero.nmfs.noaa.gov</a> for details.
<b>Hogfish</b>	8 in. min. total length	None	None	
<b>Banded rudderfish</b>	14 in. min. fork length and 22 in. max. fork length	None	None	
<b>Black seabass</b>	None	None	None	
<b>Snapper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lane: 8 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Mutton: 16 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Vermilion (beeliner): 10 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Yellowtail, cubera, gray (mangrove), and hogfish: 12 in. min. total length</li> <li>• Red: 13 in. min. total length</li> <li>• None for mahogany, dog, schoolmaster, queen, blackfin, and silk</li> </ul>	Red snapper is managed under an IFQ program; you must have an IFQ allocation to harvest red snapper. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quotas online at <a href="http://portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html">portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html</a> .		You must call NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement at least 3 hours, but no more than 24 hours, before landing red snapper. You must report the location of landing, name of the IFQ dealer receiving your catch, and estimated gutted weight of your catch per IFQ category. You may not transfer red snapper between vessels at sea or dockside. Call <b>877.376.4877</b> or go to <a href="http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov">sero.nmfs.noaa.gov</a> for details.
<b>Tilefish (blueline, golden, and goldface)</b>	None	Tilefish are managed under an IFQ program; you must have an IFQ allocation to harvest tilefish. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quotas online at <a href="http://portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html">portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html</a> .		You must call NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement at least 3 hours, but no more than 24 hours, before landing tilefish. You must report the location of landing, name of the IFQ dealer receiving your catch, and estimated gutted weight of your catch per IFQ category. You may not transfer tilefish between vessels at sea or dockside. Call <b>877.376.4877</b> or go to <a href="http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov">sero.nmfs.noaa.gov</a> for details.

Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
Gray triggerfish	14 in. min. fork length	12 fish per trip. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quota online at <a href="http://gulfcouncil.org/fishing_regulations/CommercialRegulations.pdf">gulfcouncil.org/fishing_regulations/CommercialRegulations.pdf</a> .	Closed Jun. 1–Jul. 31	
<b>HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES</b>				
Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
Shark	None	Under the LDWF-issued shark permit, 36 large coastal sharks per trip per vessel per day; large coastal sharks include: blacktip, bull, great hammerhead, lemon, nurse, sandbar, scalloped hammerhead, silky, smooth hammerhead, spinner, and tiger sharks. Harvest limits vary under the Federal Shark Permit.	State waters: closed Apr. 1–Jun. 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You must have an LDWF-issued Shark Permit (no fee) to harvest shark. If you're fishing in federal waters, you must also have a Federal Shark Permit.</li> <li>You may not possess any sandbar sharks unless you have a valid Federal Shark Research Permit.</li> <li>Shark finning is illegal. All sharks aboard your vessel must have their fins naturally attached by at least some portion of uncut skin.</li> <li>You may not transfer sharks between vessels.</li> <li>You may only skin or scale sharks after you have put them on shore or when you sell them.</li> </ul>
Swordfish	29 in. min. carcass length or 33 lb. min. dressed weight			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You must have a Federal Commercial Swordfish Permit to harvest, possess, or sell swordfish, regardless of whether you're fishing in state or federal waters.</li> <li>You may not transfer swordfish between vessels in state or federal waters.</li> <li>You may only skin or scale swordfish after you have put them on shore or when you sell them.</li> </ul>
Tuna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bigeye and yellowfin: 27 in. min. curved fork length*</li> <li>Bluefin: 73 in. min. curved fork length*</li> <li>Albacore and skipjack: none</li> </ul> <p>*You may remove the head of these tuna species, as long as the carcass length without the head exceeds the minimum size requirement.</p>	Federal restrictions apply.	Federal seasons apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You must have a Federal Commercial Tuna Permit to harvest, possess, or sell Atlantic albacore, bigeye, bluefin, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna, regardless of whether you're fishing in state or federal waters. You must follow both state and federal laws, rules, and regulations, regardless of where you're fishing. Go to <a href="http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/species/tunas/index.html">www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/species/tunas/index.html</a> for federal information.</li> <li>Seasonal changes in federal regulations may supersede LDWF's regulations. Go to <a href="http://hmspermits.noaa.gov">hmspermits.noaa.gov</a> or call the Atlantic Tunas Information Line at 888.872.8862 for the most current regulations.</li> <li>You may only skin or scale tuna after you have put them on shore or when you sell them.</li> </ul>



# Industry Support

## Louisiana Wild Seafood Certification Program (LWSCP)



Through LWSCP, LDWF aims to build a brand that guarantees the origin of Louisiana wild-caught seafood. Through strict chain of custody requirements, the program guarantees that all seafood products bearing the Certified Louisiana

Seafood label were caught in Louisiana or Gulf waters by a licensed Louisiana fisherman, landed at a Louisiana dock, and processed and packaged by a Louisiana-based company. The program provides education for participants on best seafood handling and sanitation practices to ensure the utmost safety and quality. When a buyer sees this label, they can be confident they're buying authentic Louisiana wild-caught seafood, a premium product known for freshness, consistent quality, and sustainability, and that they're supporting our local fishing communities.

By branding and showcasing Louisiana seafood, LWSCP helps suppliers increase the value of their seafood and remain competitive in the marketplace. LWSCP participants benefit from free marketing support, such as:

- Market portal linking Certified Louisiana Seafood suppliers with buyers
- Promotions through the program website, social media, and events including seafood festivals and industry conventions
- Point-of-sale materials such as decals, brochures, and apparel
- Access to program partners including the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board, Audubon GULF, NOAA Fisheries, Louisiana Sea Grant, and other partners who purchase and promote Certified Louisiana Seafood.

Licensed Louisiana commercial fishermen are automatically eligible for the program; licensed Louisiana Fresh Products dealers and Wholesale/Retail Seafood dealers must obtain a permit to participate. They must also comply with all state and federal permitting and reporting requirements. Find out more or sign up to participate at [www.LouisianaCertifiedSeafood.com](http://www.LouisianaCertifiedSeafood.com).

## Seafood Technology Equipment Program (STEP)

STEP provides LWSCP participants with funding to improve their equipment to increase the quality and value of their seafood, critical elements of the premium Louisiana seafood brand. Since 2012, STEP has provided more than \$1.7 million to members of Louisiana's seafood industry, including grants for docks and processors to upgrade equipment to meet Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals requirements. LDWF staff are improving the funding process, assessing future needs of the industry, and will be developing funding initiatives to meet those needs. For more information, call **225.765.3980** or **1.855.262.1764 (toll-free)**.

## Louisiana Fisheries Forward (LFF)

LFF is a voluntary education and training program for members of Louisiana's seafood community. Created by LDWF and Louisiana Sea Grant, LFF delivers training videos and fact sheets on a number of topics such as how to be a commercial fisherman and seafood business finance and management as well as hands-on workshops, training days, and demonstrations to showcase new technology and best practices. LFF's goal is to help improve the economic success of Louisiana's commercial fishing industry. Learn more at [lafisheriesforward.org](http://lafisheriesforward.org).

# Buyers and Sellers

## Licenses and Permits

To purchase and resell fish in Louisiana, you must have one of the following licenses issued by LDWF, unless otherwise noted:		
If you:	You must have a/an:	Notes:
Buy fish in Louisiana from licensed commercial fishermen for sale or resale	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License	\$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident. You may only purchase species for which a special permit is required (ex: mullet, reef fish, shark, spotted seatrout, tuna, etc.) from commercial fishermen who possess the required permit. You may be required to have special permits when purchasing federally regulated species from commercial fishermen. There are no restrictions on whom you may sell fish to.
Buy fish in Louisiana from licensed commercial fishermen for sale or resale from a vehicle	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle License	Same as above
Buy fish from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer for sale to consumers for personal or household use	Retail Seafood Dealer License	\$105 resident, \$405 nonresident. You may not purchase fish from a commercial fisherman.
Buy fish from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer for sale to consumers for personal or household use from a vehicle	Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle License	Same as above
Are a restaurant or grocer buying fish from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer and selling it raw	Retail Seafood Dealer License	\$105 resident, \$405 nonresident. You may not purchase fish from a commercial fisherman.
Are a restaurant or grocer picking up fish directly from a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer and transporting it	Retail Seafood Dealer License and applicable transport license(s)	\$105 resident, \$405 nonresident
Are a commercial fisherman selling fish to anyone who doesn't have a Louisiana Wholesale/Retail Dealer License (besides consumers) or transporting your catch out-of-state	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License	\$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident
Are a commercial fisherman selling fish directly to consumers within the state	Fresh Products License	\$20 resident, \$120 nonresident. A \$5 Resident Fresh Products-Spouse License is also available for a commercial fisherman's spouse to sell directly to consumers.
Are a dealer receiving reef fish, mackerel, or cobia harvested from the EEZ	NOAA Fisheries Gulf and South Atlantic Dealer Permit	You must also have a Gulf IFQ Dealer Endorsement if you're receiving red snapper, groupers, or tilefish. For details, contact NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office at <b>877.376.4877</b> .
Are a commercial fisherman with a Gulf IFQ account selling red snapper, groupers, or tilefish to a dealer without a Gulf IFQ Dealer Endorsement	NOAA Fisheries Gulf IFQ Dealer Endorsement	For details, contact NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office at <b>877.376.4877</b> .
Are a dealer receiving, buying, trading, or bartering Atlantic swordfish	NOAA Fisheries Atlantic Swordfish Dealer Permit	For details, contact NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office at <b>877.376.4877</b> .
Are a dealer receiving Atlantic shark species	NOAA Fisheries Atlantic Shark Dealer Permit	For details, contact NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office at <b>877.376.4877</b> .

## Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements

Dealers and retailers must keep records of the following for 3 years:

- The quantity and species of fish you purchase, the date of purchase, and the full name and license and/or permit number of the commercial fisherman, wholesale/retail dealer, or out-of-state seller from whom you purchase the fish
- The quantity and species of fish you sell and the name and license number of the person to whom you sell it
- Quantity and species of fish and the date you sell it to consumers
- The number by head count of fish which have creel limits

Dealers and retailers purchasing from commercial fishermen or anyone other than a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer or fresh products licenseholder must report these transactions every month on LDWF-issued trip tickets, documenting information about the purchase, including what it is, where and how it was caught, sizes, quantities, etc. Commercial fishermen who sell their catch directly to consumers (fresh products licenseholders) must also complete and submit trip tickets. For details, call **225.765.2371**.

Federal dealer permit holders must report landings electronically through approved reporting methods every week. Go to [www.sefsc.noaa.gov/fisheries/dealers.htm](http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/fisheries/dealers.htm) for more information.

## Shipping Requirements

You must mark all vehicles used to transport fish with the name and address of your company. You must also plainly mark all shipments containing fish and attach records, tags, or certificates showing your name and the receiver's name, an itemized statement of the number of pounds of fish, and the names of each kind or species of fish in the shipment.

To operate any commercial transport vehicle and load, unload, or transport fish, you must have one of the following LDWF-issued licenses:		
If you:	You must have a:	Notes:
Are a commercial fisherman transporting your catch to a wholesale/retail dealer	Commercial Fisherman's License	\$55 resident, \$460 nonresident
Are a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer delivering seafood	Seafood Transport License	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Are a licensed retail seafood dealer picking up seafood from a wholesale/retail dealer and transporting it to your place of business	Seafood Transport License	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Are transporting a licensed commercial fisherman's catch to a wholesale/retail dealer for sale	Seafood Transport License	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Are a wholesale/retail seafood dealer	Seafood Transport License purchased with the dealer license	\$30 for residents and nonresidents
Ship seafood out of state	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License OR a Transport License purchased in connection with the dealer license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealer License: \$250 resident, \$1,105 nonresident</li> <li>• Transport License: \$30 for residents and nonresidents</li> </ul>



# Louisiana Finfish Facts

43%

of Louisiana's annual finfish harvest (by value)\* comes from saltwater.

\*Not including menhaden.

Louisiana ranks

2nd

in the harvest of finfish in the United States.

\$13.5 million

The dockside value of Louisiana's total 2014 finfish harvest (not including menhaden).

## Compliance and Enforcement

Through events and outreach, LDWF works hard to make sure fishermen understand rules and regulations. LDWF's Enforcement Division ensures compliance with rules and regulations through patrols and investigations. LDWF partners with NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Coast Guard to expand their enforcement capabilities in Louisiana's waters and beyond. Penalties vary with the severity of the violation and include fines, jail time, loss of fishing license, and forfeiture of property.

## Get Involved!

To manage Louisiana's finfish fisheries, LDWF and the Commission rely on scientific data and landings records as well as public input. Our decisions directly impact you, so it's important that we have your input as we define management goals and strategies. We encourage you to participate in the management process to ensure that we consider your interests and that you understand the regulatory process and resulting management actions.

LDWF will be creating a Finfish Task Force with representatives from the finfish industry and relevant state agencies. The task force will meet regularly and will be responsible for advising LDWF and the Commission on managing and developing the finfish industry in Louisiana. Meetings will be open to the public. Email [awest@wlf.la.gov](mailto:awest@wlf.la.gov) for more information.

The Commission's monthly meetings and our open regulatory process provide additional opportunities for public input.

## Text and Email Alerts

Sign up to receive text and/or email notifications about season openings and closings, regulatory changes, and task force and Commission meetings at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov/signup](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/signup).



Drop us a line

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
2000 Quail Drive | Baton Rouge, LA 70808  
225.765.2800  
[www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-finfish](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-finfish)